United Nations A/C.4/60/SR.26

General Assembly
Sixtieth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
15 June 2006

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 26th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 12 May 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Aliyev ..... (Azerbaijan)

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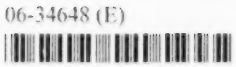

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 32: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*) (A/C.4/60/19; A/C.4/60/L.19)

1. **The Chairman** drew attention to the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, contained in document A/60/19. The General Assembly, by its resolution 59/281 of 29 March 2005, had welcomed the previous report of the Special Committee; endorsed its proposals, recommendations and conclusions; and decided that the Special Committee should continue its efforts for a comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

2. In that connection, the Special Committee, at its previous session, held from 27 February to 17 March 2006, had reviewed the implementation of its previous proposals and considered new proposals in order to enhance the capacity of the United Nations to fulfil its responsibilities in the field of peacekeeping operations. Those proposals were contained in paragraphs 28 to 188 of the report before the Special Committee.

3. **Mr. Adel** (Egypt), Rapporteur, said that the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations attached great importance to the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel, calling for clearer guidelines and procedures for information sharing between the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries. The Special Committee requested in the report that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should increase the capacity of field missions to use information technology so as to ensure the timely and effective dissemination of information to commanders in the field.

4. With regard to conduct and discipline, the report stressed the responsibility of managers and commanders in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. It also called on the Secretariat to prepare a strategy for victim assistance, a proposal on national investigations officers, and a revised model memorandum of understanding. Furthermore, as reflected in the report, the Special Committee had decided to create an ad hoc working group of experts to review those documents and to hold a one-day session to consider the advice of the group of experts before the conclusion of the General Assembly's sixtieth session.

5. At its 2006 session the Special Committee had considered three options for enhancing rapidly deployable capacities: a strategic reserve, regional capacities in support of United Nations peacekeeping operations, and inter-mission cooperation. The Secretariat should present proposals in that regard, prior to the Assembly's sixty-first session. The Special Committee also endorsed the creation of the Standing Police Capacity and requested the Secretary-General to review that capacity at the end of its first year of operation.

6. The report underscored the importance of coherent strategies for complex peacekeeping operations, and addressed the issues of the rule of law, children, gender, HIV/AIDS and public information. It also called for long-term commitment by the donor community to support disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, and welcomed the progress made in the application of integrated standards in that regard. Moreover, the Special Committee requested the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to undertake a similar process of joint policymaking with respect to security sector reform.

7. The Special Committee in its report called on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to ensure that United Nations peacekeeping operations had a positive impact on local economies, to the extent possible, and emphasized local ownership with regard to peacebuilding activities. It also welcomed the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and encouraged the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to work closely with the Peacebuilding Support Office.

8. The Special Committee took note of the Secretary-General's agenda for peacekeeping reform and looked forward to discussing the five areas of reform: partnerships, doctrine, people, organization and resources. The report welcomed the proposal of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop an operational guidance and doctrine framework, noting that a common understanding of terminology was required to promote common approaches. It also stressed the importance of incorporating best practices and lessons learned into the planning and conduct of current and future missions.

9. With regard to cooperation with regional arrangements, the Special Committee welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to move beyond

discussion of possible frameworks for cooperation and implement concrete modalities for operational cooperation. It also welcomed the proposal of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to create a dedicated capacity to support the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacities.

10. The Special Committee regarded personnel matters as important. Of particular importance was the need for professional civilian staff at United Nations Headquarters and in peacekeeping operations to have predictable career prospects. The Special Committee requested the Secretary-General to examine the challenges involved in establishing such a career structure, and to present relevant proposals at the Special Committee's next session. Furthermore, the Special Committee highlighted the critical importance of timely provision of civilian capabilities to the success of United Nations peacekeeping operations, and requested the Secretariat to present proposals to ensure the timely deployment of civilian staff at the Special Committee's next session.

11. The report stressed the need for adequate training of United Nations peacekeeping personnel. The Special Committee welcomed the establishment of an Integrated Training Service within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and looked forward to the development of an integrated training strategy, which would form the basis for the delivery of police, military and civilian training. It also noted the proposal to establish a training recognition board to recognize troop-contributing countries' military and police training courses.

12. Lastly, the Special Committee recommended in its report that the Secretariat's forthcoming review of resources should attach priority to financial and procurement rules for complex operations. It urged all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions. Although there had been continued improvement in addressing delays in the payment of reimbursement and claims, the Special Committee was concerned that some contributors were still waiting to be reimbursed for their engagement in various ongoing and closed missions.

Draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.19

13. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.19, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects".

14. **Mr. Adel** (Egypt), Rapporteur, said that under the draft resolution the General Assembly would welcome the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations; endorse the report's proposals, recommendations and conclusions; and urge Member States, the Secretariat and relevant organs of the United Nations to take all necessary steps to implement them. The Assembly would also reiterate the modalities for participation in the Special Committee, decide that the Special Committee should continue its efforts for a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects, review the implementation of its previous proposals, and consider any new proposals. Lastly, the Assembly would request the Special Committee to submit a report of its work at the Assembly's sixty-first session.

15. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Special Committee wished to take a decision on the draft resolution.

16. *It was so decided.*

17. **Mr. Zhang** (Secretary of the Committee) said that under the terms of paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.19, the General Assembly would endorse the proposals, recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee, contained in paragraphs 28 to 188 of its report. Should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, implementation of some of the Special Committee's recommendations would entail resource requirements, which had been considered in the context of the budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007.

18. Furthermore, the budgetary implications of some of the Special Committee's recommendations would require further study, and such implications, if any, would be taken into consideration in the subsequent budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations. The adoption of the draft resolution would not, therefore, give rise to any financial implications at the current stage.

19. **The Chairman** said that the sponsors of the draft resolution had expressed the wish that the draft resolution should be adopted by the Committee without a vote.

20. *Draft resolution A/C.4/60/L.19 was adopted.*

21. **Mr. Carl** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that taking into account the enormous surge in United Nations peacekeeping operations over the past decade, it would be highly desirable to re-examine the working methods of the Special Committee. There were currently nearly 90,000 United Nations civilian, military and police peacekeepers deployed in 15 peacekeeping missions in the field. The Special Committee should therefore devote more than one annual session to peacekeeping matters.

22. The Special Committee should spend more time on thematic debates, rather than merely drafting reports. The spring session of the Special Committee should therefore be shortened, while continuing to focus on drafting a report reviewing United Nations peacekeeping operations. The time freed up could then be allocated to additional short sessions dedicated to in-depth discussion of substantive United Nations peacekeeping issues.

23. **Ms. El Alaoui** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), said that she deplored the delay in the distribution of the report of the Special Committee in the official languages of the Organization. NAM had taken a position on the reasons for the delay, and had requested the Assistant Secretary-General for the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management to ensure that the report was issued in its entirety.

24. NAM had noted the response of the Assistant Secretary-General to the effect that the report would be distributed as it had been adopted by the Special Committee, and the report had indeed been distributed accordingly. NAM wished to draw the attention of the Secretariat to the need to distribute all documents submitted for the consideration of Member States through the normal channels, in hard-copy form, and addressed to the Heads of United Nations Missions. Electronic versions of reports could never replace the distribution of documents in hard-copy form through the official channels.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.